

edward johnson building
faculty of music
university of toronto



DOMB - PARR DUO

PATRICIA PARR, PIANO
DANIEL COMB, CELLO

WALTER HALL

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1980

8 P.M.

PROGRAM

Sonata No. 3 for viola da gamba and clavier
in G minor, BWV 1029

J. S. BACH

Vivace
Adagio
Allegro

Bach wrote fourteen sonatas with realized keyboard (as opposed to basso continuo) including six for violin, three for flute, two for violin or flute and three for viola da gamba. These sonatas look both backward and forward--backward in that by writing out a separate part for the right hand Bach preserved the Baroque trio sonata texture, and forward in that the absence of basso continuo foreshadowed the accompanied clavier sonata of the early Classic Era. The viola da gamba sonatas probably date from 1717-23, the years of Bach's service as Kapellmeister to Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Köthen who was himself an amateur gamba player. During Bach's lifetime the viola da gamba gave way to the cello, and works for the former could be played on the latter almost without alteration. The Bach gamba sonatas are most often played on the cello today but also on the viola, viola d'amore and even occasionally on the viola da gamba. The outline of movements and development of the material in the third gamba sonata is concerto-like, with two fast movements surrounding a long, expressive Adagio.

Sonata No. 2 in F major, Op. 99

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Allegro vivace
Adagio affettuoso
Allegro passionata
Allegro molto

Chamber music did not play a very important role in Brahms' output, making up only some two dozen of his 122 published works. In this respect Brahms was a child of his time for the musical aesthetic of the second half of the nineteenth century was not particularly favourable to the production of chamber music. Nevertheless in 1886, while staying in Switzerland, Brahms did produce three important chamber works--the Violin Sonata Op. 100, the Trio Op. 101 and the Cello Sonata Op. 99. The opening movement of the latter is

stormy and restless, with much sharing of material between cello and piano. Lyricism takes over in the second movement, however, which is a deeply-felt adagio. The third movement provides for maximum contrast, being a scherzo with many of Brahms' favourite 3-against-2 rhythms. The charming finale is based on a folk-like theme first presented by the cello, characterized by alternation of the major and minor third.

INTERMISSION

Sonata No. 4 in C major, Op. 102, No. 1

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Andante - Allegro vivace

Adagio - Allegro vivace

The years 1814-20 were not particularly productive ones for Beethoven. Apart from the two cello sonatas the only important works were four piano sonatas and the song cycle "An die ferne Geliebte". He completed the two sonatas Op. 102 by August of 1815. They met with a rather unfavourable press at the time. A reviewer in the Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung noted that they were "different, quite different, from anything we have had previously even from the same composer....so composed as to give a thoroughly unusual and peculiar impression." The C major sonata must have seemed unusual indeed at the time. It is in two rather than the usual three movements. Both movements are fast and preceded by a slow introduction. The cello begins alone, presenting a melody which is then developed contrapuntally. This leads straight into the first allegro vivace in which there is also much exchange of motives, especially between the cello and the right hand of the piano. The second slow introduction is a long-breathed adagio which leads through a reminiscence from the first slow introduction into the second allegro vivace. In this movement, bravura sixteenth note passages alternate with a dream-like section with long held double stops in the cello.

Suite Italienne

IGOR STRAVINSKY

Introduzione

Serenata

Aria

Tarantella

Minuetto e Finale

Diaghilev approached Stravinsky in the spring of 1919 with the suggestion of orchestrating some music by Pergolesi for his Russian Ballet. Stravinsky complied and produced Pulcinella, a work for chamber orchestra and three solo voices which was premiered in Paris in 1920 with choreography by Massine and scenery and costumes by Picasso. It was a success, and no one knew how to cash in on a success better than Stravinsky did. He produced no less than four adaptations of the original ballet--a concert suite for orchestra consisting of eleven of the original eighteen sections with vocal parts being replaced by instruments, and three suites consisting of five numbers each, two for violin and piano and the Suite Italienne for cello and piano, transcribed in 1932 by Stravinsky together with the cellist Gregor Piatigorsky. Those familiar with the orchestral suite will recognize all of the numbers in the cello suite except for the aria, which was taken from the original ballet. It might be noted in passing that of the original eighteen numbers only eight are based on music which is now attributed to Pergolesi, the rest being by some of his lesser known contemporaries. Pulcinella was an important work in Stravinsky's output, marking the beginning of his "neo-classical" period. He himself said of the work, "I knew I could not produce a 'forgery' of Pergolesi because my motor habits are so different; at best, I could repeat him in my own accent. That the result was to some extent a satire was probably inevitable...however, the remarkable thing about Pulcinella is not how much but how little has been added or changed. Pulcinella was my discovery of the past, the epiphany through which the whole of my late work became possible." I will leave it up to the listener to decide for himself whether tonight's work sounds more like eighteenth-century music or Stravinsky.

- notes by Robin Elliott

Next Faculty of Music Event: Opera: The Marriage of Figaro,
November 14, 15, 21, 22, 1980 at 8 p.m.
MacMillan Theatre